

ABSTRACT

The invention features a method and apparatus for collecting dependency data. The method includes collecting configuration data describing a networked resource. The collection is via a software agent executing on the networked resource. The method also
5 includes selecting dependency data from the configuration data. The dependency data specifies a dependency relationship between the networked resource and another networked resource. The method also includes populating a repository with the dependency data.

In another aspect, the invention features a method for distributed systems management, including providing a first agent monitoring a first managed device. The first
10 agent gathers dependency data describing a dependency relationship between the first managed device and a second device. The method also includes starting a second agent to monitor the second device based on the dependency data.

The invention also features a method for formatting dependency information for display, including providing a display area with a linear border, selecting a root managed
15 device to display at a root distance from the border, and displaying a non-root managed device in a dependency relationship with the root managed device. The dependency relationship has a length of at least one. Displaying includes indenting the representation of the non-root managed device a predetermined distance away from the border. The predetermined distance is greater than the root distance and is dependent upon the length.

20 The invention also features an apparatus implementing said methods.